

DEVELOPING A BANK OF READING COMPREHENSION EXAMS IN ENGLISH
FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES

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The need to assess the performance of the students who take reading comprehension courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) encouraged the production of a bank of exams aimed at evaluating the students' ability to read and understand academic and professional discourse in their field of study. This thesis describes the process involved in the developing of the bank of exams for the areas of Biology, Physics, Math and Medicine at UNAM.

For the purpose of assessment, a breakdown of the reading skills needed in reading comprehension in EAP is proposed. Without making any claim to explain the psycholinguistic processes involved in these skills, a listing of the linguistic components of these reading comprehension skills is provided as a tool for analyzing the different techniques that are used to test reading comprehension in EAP. A relationship between these techniques and the linguistic skills that reading tests in EAP should measure is established.

Finally, the different steps in the elaboration of each section of these exams and its process of validation are described, as well as the organization of the bank and the way it is actually used in continuous applications.